
SCOPING DOCUMENT

CAMBRIDGE STATION

EQB Docket No. 05-92-PPS-GRE Cambridge Station

PUC Docket No.ET-2/CN-05-347

Prepared by the Staff of the

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board
Room 300
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

April 11, 2005

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This scoping document is intended to advise the public of the scoping process and the process for the preparation of the Environmental Review document. The scoping decision will identify for the public the issues and alternatives that the EQB Chair has determined are appropriate for inclusion in the environmental review document. The scoping decision will also identify certain issues that will not be included in the environmental review document.

On March 11, 2005, Great River Energy (GRE) submitted to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (MEQB) a site permit application. On February 28, 2005, GRE submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) a Certificate of Need application regarding the Cambridge Station.

Both a certificate of need from the PUC and a Site Permit from the EQB are required before the applicant may go ahead with the project.

In accordance with the Power Plant Siting Act, (Minn. Stat. §§ 116C.51 to 116C.69), a site permit is required before a large electric power generating plant (LEPGP) like that proposed in this project can be constructed. The EQB is required to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) as part of its consideration of the request for a site permit. The EA evaluates the site specific issues. The EQB has promulgated rules for the administration of the site permitting process. Those rules are found in Minn. Rules chapter 4400. The application will be reviewed pursuant to the Alternative Permitting Review process procedures in Minnesota Rules, part 4400.2000-2950.

Under the rules adopted by the EQB in February 2004 (Minn. Rules parts 4410.7010 to 4410.7070), the EQB is the responsible governmental unit that prepares an Environmental Report on large energy projects at the certificate of need stage before the PUC. In the Environmental Report, the EQB addresses the environmental effects of the proposed project and the environmental effects of different types of facilities that might be constructed to meet the alleged need. The PUC determines whether the new large energy facility is needed and the size and type of any facility to be constructed.

In the event an applicant for a certificate of need for a LEPPG applies to the EQB for a site permit or route permit prior to the time the EQB completes the environmental report, and the project qualifies for alternative review, the EQB may elect to combine the general environmental review (i.e., Environmental Report) for the PUC with the site-specific environmental review (i.e., Environmental Assessment) for the EQB into one document. The EQB rules specifically allow for such accommodation. Minn. Rules part 4410.7060.

On March 14, 2005, the EQB Chair accepted the site permit application as substantially complete and notified the applicant in writing of the decision. Additionally, the Chair elected to combine the general environmental review (i.e., Environmental Report) for the PUC with the site-specific environmental review (i.e., Environmental Assessment) for the EQB into one document.

A copy of the Site Permit Application can be viewed on the EQB website:

<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=16153>

EQB staff expects this project to be placed on the EQB's agenda for a decision in October 2005.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

GRE proposes to construct a 170 MW, natural gas-fired, simple cycle combustion turbine generator at its existing peaking plant site near Cambridge in Isanti County, Minnesota. The proposed facility will be located on a current generating site, approximately 13 acres in size, owned by GRE. The site currently has a 25 MW, fuel oil-fired, combustion turbine generator and associated substation.

To supply natural gas to the facility, a ½-mile, 10 inch diameter lateral pipeline will be constructed to connect the Cambridge Station to the Northern Natural Gas Company's (NNG) existing interstate pipeline. The natural gas pipeline will be permitted through a separate process.

Upgrades to the substation and re-conductoring of three transmission lines that enter the Cambridge Station will be required. No change in voltage of the existing three 69 kV transmission lines is planned; therefore, no EQB HVTL routing permit would be required.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DOCUMENT

As discussed in Section 1.0 the EQB will be combining its environmental review responsibilities under the Certificate of Need process with the environmental review procedures under the EQB's siting and routing permit authority. The result will be a single environmental review document, an Environmental Assessment (EA), covering the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 4410.7035, subpart 1, and the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 4400.2750, subpart 4.

Certificate of Need Procedures

The environmental review document under the certificate of need procedures (Minnesota Rules 4410.7035, subpart 1) must include the following:

- A. A general description of the proposed project and associated facilities;
- B. A general description of the alternatives to the proposed project; these shall include:
 - The no-build alternative,
 - Demand side management;
 - Purchased power;
 - Facilities of a different size or using a different energy source;
 - Upgrading of existing facilities;
 - Transmission rather than generation; and
 - Use of renewable energy sources.
- C. An analysis of the human and environmental impacts of a project of the type proposed and of the alternatives identified;
- D. Analysis of the potential impacts that are project specific;
- E. An analysis of mitigative measures that could reasonably be implemented to eliminate or minimize any adverse impacts identified for the proposed project and each alternative;

- F. An analysis of the feasibility and availability of each alternative considered;
- G. A list of permits required for the project; and
- H. A discussion of other matters identified by the Chair.

Site and Route Permit Procedures

The environmental review document under the siting and routing permit procedures (Minnesota Rules, part 4400.2750, subpart 4) must include the following:

- A. A general description of the proposed project;
- B. A list of any alternative sites or routes that are addressed;
- C. A discussion of the potential impacts of the proposed project and each alternative site or route on the human and natural environment;
- D. A discussion of mitigative measures that could reasonably be implemented to eliminate or minimize any adverse impacts identified for the proposed project and each alternative;
- E. An analysis of the feasibility of each alternative site or route considered;
- F. A list of permits required for the project; and
- G. A discussion of other matters identified in the scoping process.

4.0 EA SCOPING PROCESS

The purpose of the scoping process is to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the development of the scope of the EA by holding a public meeting and soliciting public comment.

On Monday, April 19, 2005, the EQB will hold a public information meeting at the Community Hall Building, Cambridge Township. The meeting will be held at 6:00 pm. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information to the public about the proposed project, to answer questions, and to allow the public an opportunity to suggest alternatives and impacts that should be considered during preparation of the environmental review document. Written comments may also be submitted; written comments must be submitted no later than April 28, 2005.

Written comments should be mailed to Bill Storm, Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, 658 Cedar Street, Room 300, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155.

A scoping decision will be made by the EQB Chair. That decision will be made shortly after the close of the comment period. Persons who want to be advised of the Chair's scoping decision can register their names with the EQB at the public meeting, on the EQB website or contact Bill Storm at (651) 296-9535. The final scoping decision will also be posted on the EQB website.

5.0 DRAFT SCOPE FOR COMPLETION OF EA

The following is a draft outline of the EA scope and contains those areas to be addressed within the EA document.

1.0 OVERVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Description

2.1.1 Description of Power Generating Equipment and Processes

2.1.2 Air Emission Control Equipment

2.1.3 Water Use

2.1.4 Wastewater

2.1.5 Solid and Hazardous Waste Generation

2.1.6 Fuel Supply

2.1.7 Electrical Interconnection

2.2 Purpose

2.3 Sources of Information

3.0 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Certificate of Need

3.2 Site Permit Requirement

3.2.1 Environmental Assessment

3.2.2 Public Hearing

3.3 Other Permits

3.4 Issues Outside EQB Authority

4.0 ALTERNATIVE SITES

4.1 No-build Alternative

4.2 Demand Side Management

4.3 Purchase Power

4.3.1 Long term Purchase Power

4.3.2 Short term Purchase Power

4.4 Alternative Fuels

4.4.1 Fossil Fuel Technologies

4.4.2 Renewable Resource Technologies

4.5 Up-grading Existing Facilities

4.6 New Transmission

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

6.0 HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

6.1 Air Quality

Potential to Emit

Criteria Pollutants

Air Emissions Risk Analysis

6.2 Biological Resources

Flora

Fauna

Rare and Unique Natural Resources

6.3 Culture, Archeological and Historic Resources

6.4 Geology and Soils

6.5 Health and Safety

6.6 Land Use

Zoning

- Displacement
- Recreational Areas
- 6.7 Noise
- 6.8 Socioeconomics
- 6.9 Transportation
- 6.10 Visual Impacts and Aesthetics
- 6.11 Water Resources
 - Surface Water
 - Groundwater
 - Wetlands
- 6.12 Waste Management and Disposal
 - Wastewater
 - Solid Waste
 - Hazardous Waste
- 7.0 SUMMARY OF MITIGATIVE MEASURES
- 8.0 FEASIBILITY

6.0 SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF EA

The Environmental Assessment on the LEPGP will be completed by July 18, 2005.

Upon completion of the EA, the EQB will notify those persons who have asked to be notified of the completion. In addition, the EQB will publish notice of the availability of the EA in the EQB Monitor (the bi-weekly newsletter of the agency). The EA will be made available for review and will be posted on the EQB webpage. The EQB will hold a public hearing in Cambridge to provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions and to comment on the Site Permit application. The public will also have a period of time (at least 10 days) after the meeting to submit written comments.

Comments on the EA shall become part of the record in the proceeding, but the Board shall not be required to revise or supplement the EA document.